

**Testimony on SB 394
to
The Senate Agriculture Committee**

**by Katie Howard
Environmental and Laboratory Issues Director
Kansas Department of Agriculture**

January 26, 2010

Good morning, Chairman Taddiken and members of the committee. I am Katie Howard, environmental and laboratory issues director for the Kansas department of agriculture (KDA), and I am here in support of Senate Bill 394.

KDA's pesticide and fertilizer program is charged with certifying pesticide applicators. Competency testing is a requirement of that certification process. New applicators and those seeking to renew a certification need educational material to prepare them to take the written examinations and to safely apply pesticides. By statute, any study materials we use to develop our certification exams must come from Kansas State University (KSU). The KSU study manuals currently available are outdated. Some of the manuals have not been updated for more than 20 years. The pest control industry has not remained static. Pesticide development and application technology have dramatically evolved in recent years, and continue to do so.

The proposed amendments will allow KDA to use the most current material to prepare the certification exams, whether the material is developed at KSU or elsewhere. In doing so, we would ensure the most up to date educational information is available to our pesticide applicators. For example, the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) has a free general manual we could direct applicants to use. There are EPA funded regional manuals as well as relevant manuals from other sources. The current statute would prohibit KDA from using these materials.

Our proposed statute changes will allow KDA to base our competency certification process on the most current educational materials. This benefits the pesticide applicators, the consumer, and the environment.

I will answer questions at the appropriate time.